

Meditations
on the
Beatitudes

BY
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Foreword

There are a great many helps to the reading of the Bible. Learned men spend their lives on commentaries and learned discussions regarding the subtle variations of the possible meaning of a single word. Some theological writers buttress their opinions by quotations from the Hebrew, the Greek, and the Latin versions, and call in the Higher Critics and the Archaeological Inscriptions of Babylon and Egypt as a further elucidation.

If all this ponderous learning were necessary for the intelligent reading of the Bible, then the book would be as closed, to the majority of us, as it was said to be in the Dark Ages. But, fortunately for us all, it is the one Book in the world containing vital truths that can be read and comprehended by uneducated and simple minds. That it also is a Book which very subtle and concentrated minds find pleasure and profit in studying, is part of its remarkableness. The fact that little children are absorbed by its stories, and can take in their meaning, and follow their logic, does not in the least prevent erudite scholars from poring over the very same stories with fascinated intentness, and getting the very same truths from them.

But one thing is certain, no one can read the Bible comprehendingly and remain uneducated. One need not have even a commentary—a small dictionary is sufficient, and just the power to read one's language—to pass into the greatest company of thinkers the world has ever known, and to get from them first-hand their experience of God.

And it is not just education of the mind—it's happiness! The thing we all seek. It is expansion of the soul, the realization of infinite growth towards God. The gay innocence of a heart purified and serene.

These fragmentary meditations on "the Blesseds" were made last winter as a solace to my troubled mind, pressed down and darkened by the War. They helped me get my balance, and proved so joyful an occupation that I would gladly have gone on and on with them. But I realize that I can never complete even my own thought on these "living words." I look down long, sunny glades, beautiful vistas open out. Every day I meet one or another of the "Blesseds" in some concrete form, some swift reminder. I shall never come to the end of this happy Quest.

But, like the woman in the parable, I am calling my friends and my neighbors in to rejoice with me over the treasure which I have found.

Lord, my heart is not haughty, nor mine eyes lofty: neither do I exercise myself in great matters, or in things too high for me.

Surely I have behaved and quieted myself as a child that is weaned of his mother: my soul is even as a weaned child.

And seeing the multitudes, he went up into a mountain; and when he was set, his disciples came unto him:

And he opened his mouth, and taught them, saying:



lessed are the Poor in
Spirit: for theirs is the
Kingdom of Heaven.

I SUPPOSE "poor in spirit" does not mean poor-spirited, any more than rich-looking means rich in looks, yet what does it mean?

I have heard many sermons explaining away the Sermon on the Mount, preachers are always telling what our Lord did not mean, but I feel sure that our Lord never explained it away. It strikes me that in all His further utterances He reiterated and amplified it.

Poor in Spirit! Well, since theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven, blessed indeed are they! But what is that quality which makes a man "poor in spirit?" Is it a state of mind, or heart, or both? What would a man be who was the reverse of poor in spirit?

Two men went up into the temple to pray; the one a Pharisee, and the other a publican. The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican.

I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess.

And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven,

but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner.

I tell you this man went down to his house justified rather than the other: for every one that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.

I wonder if that story did not astonish the men who first heard it more than it could astonish us—that story of the sinner whose contrition was an open door to the Kingdom? It was a great shame to be called a sinner in Christ's day. Today we acquiesce very serenely in being "unworthy," and we say "amen" with considerable calmness to "having transgressed God's holy law," and proclaim ourselves miserable sinners in rhythmic, ringing tones, and rise up and meet our neighbor's eye without a blink. If we should specify aloud:—"we dishonest, wasteful, heartless, criminally ignorant, impure, liars, beseech Thee to hear us, good Lord," the miracle of the Kingdom of Heaven being for such as we might seem incredible.

Perhaps, when we are neither horror-struck nor frightened, nor actually ashamed to know we are sinners, our confession does not bring "joy" in the presence of the angels of God." Perhaps, even a whole church full of

such "miserable sinners" would cause no commotion whatever in Heaven. But if there was a single "broken and contrite heart" among all the calm, sedate ones, that man's soul would enter in.

Out of the depths have I cried unto thee,
O Lord.

Lord, hear my voice: let thine ears be attentive to the voice of my supplications.

If thou, Lord, shouldest mark iniquities,
O Lord, who shall stand?

But there is forgiveness with thee, that thou mayest be feared.

I wait for the Lord, my soul doth wait, and in his word do I hope.

My soul waiteth for the Lord more than they that watch for the morning: I say, more than they that watch for the morning.

That is the cry of a bankrupt life, very poor in spirit, helpless to right itself, or finish the day's work unaided. But there is nothing poor-spirited in its utter dependence, nor is there any cowardliness. The strange thing about it was that David, and Isaiah, and Moses—those men of old—knew "without having seen" to whom to take their broken contrite hearts for healing.

"O that I knew where I might find Him!"

Job voiced the cry of many a sinner before and since his day. Yet how natural it was that when He came, the Saviour of mankind, the first instinct of the man "poor in spirit, hungering after righteousness" was, not so much joy at the vision of his Redeemer, as broken-heartedness at the thought of his own unworthiness. Peter's "depart from me, for I am a sinful man," is the first reaction of the human heart in the presence of God. It needs an act of pure faith—the direct faith of a little child—to arise and go to our Father.

And they brought unto him also infants, that he would touch them; but when his disciples saw it, they rebuked them.

But Jesus called them unto him, and said, Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God.

Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child shall in no wise enter therein.

If this is a great spiritual truth, if to humble men of heart the Kingdom of Heaven is given, why not seek such men out, and get from them first hand a full description of

this Kingdom of Heaven. Surely, they could tell us! Is it a state of mind? Is it a state of being? Is it something to possess now, or must one die to enter in? Once in is one always there, or is it lost and regained more than once? Is joy on the faces of those who possess it the mark of a sojourner there, or is hope or serenity?—Does simplicity mark its citizens, quietness, other wordliness, or greater activity and spontaneity? I am sure I know men and women who are of the Kingdom of Heaven, but they find no words adequate to describe their possession. There is a look on their faces, or rather a light shines through their faces, something radiates from them, their touch is healing. But I have never heard from them any formula for the Kingdom of Heaven. Our Lord flashed many lights upon it, approached it by parable now from this side, now from that. But Past Master though He was of words, He only said what it was like. He never said what it was.

He put a value upon it—worth more than all the world of describable things; He pointed out the Way—"I am the Way, the truth and the life"; He designated those that find the Way—the poor in spirit, the persecuted for

righteousness sake, those who have left all for the love of God, but—

And when he was demanded of the Pharisees, when the kingdom of God should come, he answered them and said, The kingdom of God cometh not with observation:

Neither shall they say, Lo here! or, lo there! for, behold, the kingdom of God is within you.

Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy loving kindness: according unto the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions.

Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin.

For I acknowledge my transgressions: and my sin is ever before me.

Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight: that thou mightest be justified when thou speakest, and be clear when thou judgest.

Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me.

Behold, thou desirest truth in the inward parts; and in the hidden part thou shalt make me to know wisdom.

Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean;
wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.

Make me to hear joy and gladness; that the
bones which thou hast broken may rejoice.

Hide thy face from my sins, and blot out all
mine iniquities.

Create in me a clean heart, O God; and
renew a right spirit within me.

Cast me not away from thy presence; and
take not thy Holy Spirit from me. * * *

O Lord, open thou my lips; and my mouth
shall shew forth thy praise.

For thou desirest not sacrifice; else would I
give it; thou delightest not in burnt offering.

The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a
broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt
not despise.

And he put forth a parable to those which
were bidden, when he marked how they
chose out the chief rooms; saying unto them,
When thou art bidden of any man to a wed-
ding, sit not down in the highest room; lest
a more honourable man than thou be bidden
of him;

And he that bade thee and him come and
say to thee, Give this man place; and thou
begin with shame to take the lowest room.

But when thou art bidden, go and sit down in the lowest room; that when he that bade thee cometh, he may say unto thee, Friend, go up higher: then shalt thou have worship in the presence of them that sit at meat with thee.

For whosoever exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.

And when one of them that sat at meat with him heard these things, he said unto him, Blessed is he that shall eat bread in the kingdom of God.

Then said he unto him, A certain man made a great supper, and bade many:

And sent his servant at supper time to say to them that were bidden, Come; for all things are now ready.

And they all with one consent began to make excuse. The first said unto him, I have bought a piece of ground, and I must needs go and see it: I pray thee have me excused.

And another said, I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I go to prove them:

And another said, I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come.

So that servant came, and shewed his lord these things. Then the master of the house being angry said to his servant, Go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in hither the poor, and the maimed, and the halt, and the blind.

And the servant said, Lord, it is done as thou hast commanded, and yet there is room.

And the lord said unto the servant, Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled.



lessed are those that
Mourn: for they shall
be Comforted.

I ASK myself, does any comfort, no matter how great, compensate for some griefs! And, remembering certain faces and certain broken lives, I dare not assure myself that even the most spiritual of God's saints go unscathed. The pain that death brings, and the shame that disgrace inflicts, and the very memory of physical suffering, leave scars one carries to one's grave. For grief there is no compensation. Suffering is suffering; it leaves a cruel mark, a lurking pain that sometimes darkens the most radiant day.

What, then, is that comfort which coming to those that mourn can make them blessed, I ask myself, since it is not compensation, not even in the sense men crave it, consolation. Since our dead are not ours, alive and with us again, and we mourn them with outstretched, pleading hands in vain, what does God Almighty offer us!

But because I have said these things unto you, sorrow hath filled your heart.

Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you.

It is a beautiful, surrounding word that—Comforter! And it immediately brings a blessed memory of childhood, of being picked up, gathered to the breast of one big and understanding, of being encouraged to cry out our fright or grief or hurt in the shelter of loving arms, of being soothed and reassured by wise and tender words, of being heartened to go back to our bed or our play or our little task, steadied with the knowledge of the heart of love that has never failed us.

As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you.

So often, in urging the comforts of religion upon stricken souls, compensation, consolation, even forgetfulness are clumsily emphasized quite without warrant. It is because we mourn that we are comforted; not, I believe, because we are diverted or stoical, or ready to forget. In fact, lovely as that word—comfort—is, implying warmth and lightness and a tender enveloping touch; and wonderful as that idea of a Comforter is, implying serenity and wisdom and great personal love and comprehension, nowhere can I find a suggestion that the revelation of the Comforter to those in pain, to those who mourn, removes the reason for the pain. It

seems rather that pain, touching a secret spring in the soul, opens the door. We may look aghast at that door, for by it, fear and despair and a temptation to die may enter. But, Oh, miracle of Hope! Oh, boundless inspiration for a higher Faith! the Spirit of the Love of God also enters there:

Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him and will sup with him, and he with me.

These things have I spoken unto you, being yet present with you.

But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.

Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.

This then is the blessedness, not that we cease to mourn, but that there has come to us One who understands, who loves infinitely, and who is tenderly pitiful.

Behold, a king shall reign in righteousness, and princes shall rule in judgment.

And a man shall be as an hiding place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest; as rivers of water in a dry place, as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land.

And the eyes of them that see shall not be dim, and the ears of them that hear shall hearken.

Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God.

Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned: for she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins.

The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them: and the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose.

It shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice even with joy and singing: the glory of Lebanon shall be given unto it, the excellency of Carmel and Sharon, they shall see the glory of the Lord, and the excellency of our God.

Strengthen ye the weak hands, and confirm the feeble knees.

Say to them that are of a fearful heart, Be strong, fear not: behold, your God will come with vengeance, even God with a recompense; he will come and save you.

Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. Then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing: for in the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert.

And the parched ground shall become a pool, and the thirsty land springs of water; in the habitation of dragons, where each lay, shall be grass with reeds and rushes.

And an highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called The way of holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it; but it shall be for those: the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein.

No lion shall be there, nor any ravenous beast shall go up thereon, it shall not be found there; but the redeemed shall walk there:

And the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me: * * *

Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted.

If, then, one sure way for our numbed hearts to feel the great heart of God is through the broken and shattered barrier pain has thrown down, blessed are those who mourn, not for their grief, but that they have found God.

Thank God, there are other ways of finding God, but mercifully, to those who mourn—He comes.

And, as One acquainted with grief, He understands. Our Lord explained to His disciples one beautiful way the Spirit of Love, the Comforter, would comfort.

Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come.

He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you.

All things that the Father hath are mine: therefore said I, that he shall take of mine, and shall shew it unto you.

The disconsolate disciples were not to be diverted, made to forget, urged to "take up another interest." On the contrary, with the

strength of the Spirit of Truth, all things were to be brought to their remembrance—"whatsoever I have said unto you," their Master assured them. Helped by the Holy Spirit, they were to think back and see their Lord as by a new vision:

And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever;

Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.

I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you.

Yet a little while, and the world seeth me no more; but ye see me: because I live, ye shall live also.

At that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you.

Moreover, inasmuch as part of the joy of friendship is the sharing of delight, the contagion of enthusiasm, so part of the terrible-ness of grief is the contemplation of a long life dispossessed of companionship, and debarred of intercourse. This break our Lord so clearly provided against with His dearest friends, and their whole after lives proved so

beyond a doubt, that the barrier called death did not separate them from their Master, but that they actually grew in the knowledge and love of Him, that for all who mourn, the coming of the Comforter has a sudden rapturous possibility.

Transcendently, the Spirit of God reveals God to us, but why not us to ourselves, why not us to those whom we have "loved long since———and lost awhile?"

One hesitates to amplify. No one can be the guide for another in this realm of the spiritual. My soul and the soul of my dearest friend may or may not find each the other across the barrier of death, but certain it is that the only blessed trysting place will be that of the Spirit. If we think together it must be "in Him," if we act together it must be by Him.

And I heard a voice saying unto me, Arise, Peter; slay and eat.

But I said, Not so, Lord: for nothing common or unclean hath at any time entered into my mouth.

But the voice answered me again from heaven, What God hath cleansed, that call not thou common.

And this was done three times: and all were drawn up again into heaven.

And, behold, immediately there were three men already come unto the house where I was, sent from Cesarea unto me.

And the Spirit bade me go with them, nothing doubting. Moreover these six brethren accompanied me, and we entered into the man's house:

And he shewed us how he had seen an angel in his house, which stood and said unto him, Send men to Joppa, and call for Simon, whose surname is Peter;

Who shall tell thee words, whereby thou and all thy house shall be saved.

And as I began to speak, the Holy Ghost fell on them, as on us at the beginning.

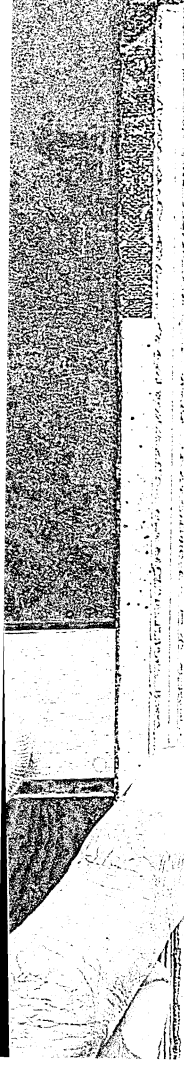
Then remembered I the word of the Lord, how that he said, John indeed baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost.

Forasmuch then as God gave them the like gift as he did unto us, who believed on the Lord Jesus Christ, what was I, that I could withstand God?

And the disciples were filled with joy, and with the Holy Ghost.



lessed are the Meek:
for they shall inherit
the Earth.



Tis the last thing that one would think they would get—"the earth!" I went to the dictionary, thinking that the vision which "meek" evoked must be a caricature. But no, the meek are even more so than I dreamed! To be meek is to be "gentle," submissive, yielding, mild of temper, unassuming, patient! All these packed together make a man fit to inherit—the earth. He does not have to push and strive after it, it is his naturally; he is born to it.

The meek shall inherit the earth!

It is astonishing; yet, after all, what is the earth? Is it what it was to Adam just after God called it "very good?" Or is it the world as man has made it today—very bad, in spots? I feel as though the gift that the "gentle, yielding, mild, patient, unassuming" man would care to inherit would be more Adam's earth than our world. A garden where all things grew and where the animals were neither afraid of one another nor of the gardener. A peaceful, beautiful place, well watered, well protected, where the days were warm and the nights were cool, and where a man thinking high thoughts could speak to his Maker.

If the gardener's earth, not the capitalist's, is meant, then surely it is plain enough. All simple folk, from St. Francis to David Grayson, all gardeners, farmers, naturalists, artists, the poets and philosophers of nature, all to whom the earth has yielded her secrets, have been the reverse of proud men, arrogant, impatient men.

From Cincinnatus to Burbank they have submitted themselves to Nature's laws and yielded to her dictates with a reverence that was patent to all men. Gentle they must be who deal with animals or plants, mild of temper and patient, or they court catastrophe; as they grow in wisdom they must perforce grow in wonder and in admiration and in humility.

Put your naturalist, your farmer, your natural philosopher, among a crowd of world-hustlers; gentleness, submissive yielding to the world's laws, mildness and patience will not get that world; he will be lucky if he does not get the poorhouse. Put him in a garden, and his gentleness is a money-maker, his patience a master touch, his humility in the presence of great facts of nature and his submission to law give him the essential quality for success.

Nature is a great Mistress. You cannot deceive her by cunning, or capture her by the blowing of trumpets; you cannot cajole her by promises, or frighten her by violence. You cannot dictate to her a new law, or worry her into abrogating an old one. Hurrying her will not force her secret; bullying her will not wrest from her a single clue. No flattery will make a flower grow. You may be clever at a bargain, but you cannot bargain with nature. She fixes the price and the time and the process. Nor does she ever wholly part with her possessions. She has a long memory for places. Time is her confederate, and lets her back into her old premises, over a ruined wall, through a broken hedge, to work her will; the beasts and the winds and the birds are her allies, her children.

And Babylon, the glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldees' excellency, shall be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah.

It shall never be inhabited, neither shall it be dwelt in from generation to generation: neither shall the Arabian pitch tent there; neither shall the shepherds make their fold there.

But the wild beasts of the desert shall lie there; and their houses shall be full of doleful creatures; and owls shall dwell there, and satyrs shall dance there.

And the wild beasts of the islands shall cry in their desolate houses, and the dragons in their pleasant palaces; and her time is near to come, and her days shall not be prolonged.

A long life, face to face with God in nature, must of necessity make for meekness. Job's humility was in no wise a feigned one; that it is now for us not also a despairing humility, as was his, is due to the revelation of God through Jesus Christ.

Then the Lord answered Job out of the whirlwind, and said,

Who is this that darkeneth counsel by words without knowledge?

Gird up now thy loins like a man; for I will demand of thee, and answer thou me.

Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth? declare, if thou hast understanding.

Who hath laid the measures thereof, if thou knowest? or who hath stretched the line upon it?

Whereupon are the foundations thereof fastened? or who laid the corner stone thereof; When the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy?

Or who shut up the sea with doors, when it brake forth, as if it had issued out of the womb?

When I made the cloud the garment thereof, and thick darkness a swaddlingband for it, And brake up for it my decreed place, and set bars and doors.

And said, Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further; and here shall thy proud waves be stayed?

Hast thou commanded the morning since thy days; and caused the day-spring to know his place; * * *

Hast thou entered into the springs of the sea? or hast thou walked in the search of the depth?

Have the gates of death been opened unto thee? or hast thou seen the doors of the shadow of death? * * *

Hast thou entered into the treasures of the snow? or hast thou seen the treasures of the hail,

Which I have reserved against the time of trouble, against the day of battle and war?

By what way is the light parted which scattereth the east wind upon the earth?

Who hath divided a water-course for the overflowing of waters, or a way for the lighting of thunder;

To cause it to rain on the earth, where no man is; on the wilderness, wherein there is no man;

To satisfy the desolate and waste ground; and to cause the bud of the tender herb to spring forth? * * *

Canst thou bind the sweet influences of Pleiades, or loose the bands of Orion?

Canst thou bring forth Mazzaroth in his season? or canst thou guide Arcturus with his sons?

Knowest thou the ordinances of heaven? canst thou set the dominions thereof in the earth?

Canst thou lift up thy voice to the clouds, that abundance of waters may cover thee?

Canst thou send lightnings, that they may go, and say unto thee, Here we are?

Who hath put wisdom in the inward parts?
or who hath given understanding to the
heart?

Who provideth for the raven his food? when
his young ones cry unto God, they wander
for lack of meat.

Then Job answered the Lord, and said,
I know that thou canst do everything, and
that no thought can be withholden from
thee.

Who is he that hideth counsel without
knowledge? therefore have I uttered that I
understood not; things too wonderful for
me, which I knew not.

Hear, I beseech thee, and I will speak: I
will demand of thee, and declare thou unto
me.

I have heard of thee by the hearing of the
ear; but now mine eye seeth thee.

Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in
dust and ashes.

To abhor oneself and repent in dust and
ashes after such a contemplation of God in
Nature was, I think, rather an Old Testa-
ment habit, but, thank God, we have escaped
that point of view; we have got out of the
dispensation of fear into the great one of

love. Under our Lord's serene guidance the patient seeker, the meek of heart, finds in the Creator of all things, his Father:

And he said unto his disciples, Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat; neither for the body, what ye shall put on.

The life is more than meat, and the body is more than raiment.

Consider the ravens: for they neither sow nor reap; which neither have storehouse nor barn; and God feedeth them; how much more are ye better than the fowls?

And which of you with taking thought can add to his stature one cubit?

If ye then be not able to do that thing which is least, why take ye thought for the rest?

Consider the lilies how they grow: they toil not, they spin not; and yet I say unto you, that Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these.

If then God so clothe the grass, which is today in the field, and tomorrow is cast into the oven; how much more will he clothe you, O ye of little faith?

And seek not ye what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink, neither be ye of doubtful mind.

For all these things do the nations of the world seek after: and your Father knoweth that ye have need of these things.

But rather seek ye the kingdom of God; and all these things shall be added unto you.

Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom.



lessed are they which do Hunger
and Thirst after Righteousness:
for they shall be filled.

IT seems that these eight Beatitudes were our Lord's text in this so-called Sermon on the Mount, and the discourse which followed was His amplification. Probably all of the sermon was not remembered in its original sequence, but the form in which He pronounced His text made it easy to recall and simple to repeat.

Not that the ideas were simple to His hearers in the sense of being familiar to them. How new and startling they were we can form very little idea. In the first place, His audience was startled, because, as they asserted afterward, He spoke with authority, and not as one of the scribes. That is, He spoke as one who knew straight from God, not as the teachers of the Temple Schools, who had to quote only from written parchments, and then only by permission from the chief Rabbis. But chiefly the thought which lay back of His sermon was the startling and radical note which frightened His hearers even while it charmed them. We, who have accepted that thought—at least, with our lips—as our religion, are so familiar with the sound of the words that it takes a great catastrophe, a world war or an earthquake to prove to us that the truths lying back of

the words are known only theoretically to most of us.

This Beatitude concerning those who hunger and thirst after righteousness, and our Lord's comments, text and sermon—what a sensation they must have made! For if one takes all that our Lord is reported to have said in the Sermon on the Mount concerning righteousness, desire, prayer, fulfillment, with this great assertion as the keynote:

Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness; for they shall be filled:

much that seemed fragmentary is suddenly all of a beautiful piece; much that may have confused us as being too fanciful in the "seek and ye shall find, knock and it shall be opened," and in the "take no thought for your life" sayings, because we were wont to lay the accent on "Be not anxious," as though that were our Lord's text, becomes suddenly new and thrilling even to us.

Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness; for they shall be filled.

That is:

* * * when ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do: for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking.

Be not ye therefore like unto them, for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask him.

After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name.

Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread.

And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.

And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: * * *

Moreover when ye fast, be not, as the hypocrites, of a sad countenance: for they disfigure their faces that they may appear unto men to fast. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward.

But thou, when thou fastest, anoint thine head, and wash thy face;

That thou appear not unto men to fast, but unto thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly.

Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal:

But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal:

For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.

The light of the body is the eye: if therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light.

But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness!

No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.

Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment?

Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they?

Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit unto his stature?

And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin:

And yet I say unto you, That even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these.

Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith?

Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed?

(For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things.

But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.

Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.

The hunger and thirst for righteousness, for perfection, is not a common quality; rather is it a mark—the chief mark—of genius. If a man is possessed by a passion for perfection, his name becomes sooner or later immortal.

The religious enthusiasts who are martyred for their belief in perfect Love, the patriots who lead forlorn hopes inspired by their belief in perfect Justice, the artists who live broken lives, scoffed at, for their belief in perfect Beauty, all the would-be saviors of society who strive for the perfection of the god-like in man, no matter what their failures and stumbles, are the captains and leaders of the human race. They carry the hope of humanity in their bosoms.

The very hunger after perfection, after righteousness, annuls other hungers and thirsts. To those of us who try to hunger and thirst after righteousness from a sense of duty, the wistful desire for the things "which the nations of the world seek after" is forever importuning our attention.

What we call the impracticalness of those whose "eye is single," who serve only one master, is both a reproach and a provocation to us. Those who take it for granted that somehow "all these things will be added unto them," seem ungrateful and shiftless. While for the man who forgets to be hungry because of some supreme absorption, we can scarcely restrain our nervous irritation, and yet—

* * * upon this came his disciples, and marvelled that he talked with the woman: yet no man said, What seekest thou? or, Why talkest thou with her?

The woman then left her waterpot, and went her way into the city, and saith to the men, Come, see a man, which told me all things that ever I did: is not this the Christ?

Then they went out of the city, and came unto him.

In the meanwhile his disciples prayed him, saying, Master, eat.

But he said unto them, I have meat to eat that ye know not of.

Therefore said the disciples one to another, Hath any man brought him aught to eat?

Jesus saith unto them, My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work.

Say not ye, There are yet four months, and then cometh harvest? behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest. * * *

Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled:

Since God alone is perfect, all righteousness, beauty, truth, justice begin and end in Him.

Hunger and thirst for all righteousness, for all completeness, for all perfection, must find satisfaction in Him and in Him alone.

It was this knowledge, intuitive or inspired, that made the race of Abraham great, that left David among the immortals in spite of his crimes, that inspired Isaiah, that drove John the Baptist into the wilderness, and, above all, immeasurably above all, made the earthly life of Jesus possible.

As the hart panteth after the water brooks,
so panteth my soul after thee, O God.

My soul thirsteth for God, for the living
God: when shall I come and appear before
God?

My tears have been my meat day and night,
while they continually say unto me, Where
is thy God?

Deep calleth unto deep at the noise of thy
waterspouts: all thy waves and thy billows
are gone over me.

Yet the Lord will command his loving kind-
ness in the daytime, and in the night his
song shall be with me, and my prayer unto
the God of my life.

Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the
waters, and he that hath no money; come ye,

buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price.

Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread? and your labour for that which satisfieth not? hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness.

Incline your ear, and come unto me: hear, and your soul shall live; and I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David.

Behold, I have given him for a witness to the people, a leader and commander to the people.

Behold, thou shalt call a nation that thou knowest not, and nations that knew not thee shall run unto thee because of the Lord thy God, and for the Holy One of Israel; for he hath glorified thee.

Seek ye the Lord while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near:

Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.

For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord.

For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.

For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater.

So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it.

For ye shall go out with joy, and be led forth with peace: the mountains and the hills shall break forth before you into singing, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands.

Instead of the thorn shall come up the fir tree, and instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle tree: and it shall be to the Lord for a name, for an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off.

We who live in an age and belong to a race priding itself that it calls "a spade a spade,"

are sometimes bewildered by the imagery of our language of religion. We say our prayers in a vocabulary quite other than that which we use for transacting our daily affairs. This is all well enough for those of us who are familiar with the Bible as a whole, to whom, for an instance, the prayers of David and of Job and of Isaiah are part of life.

But there are many souls very ignorant of the Old Testament, grown men and women much more familiar with the Wotan and Siegfried motives of Wagner than of the Messiah motives of the prophets and kings and poets of Israel.

Our Lord's mystical, figurative language by which He proclaims Himself the assuager of the hunger and thirst of all the sons of men since Adam, the redeemer of all souls in bondage since Eve, falls into the rhythm and symbolism of the Old Testament Seers and Poets with a perfection that would be the height of art were it not something even greater. But to those among His first hearers who were not familiar with the dreams and aspirations, the hopes and burning desires of their own great poets and prophets, our Lord's words were baffling, just as they are to some of His hearers today. They tried to take them in a material sense and were

offended. Even the disciples found them "hard sayings." In His great speech to the multitude toward the last of His life, when our Lord gave the final answer to David's and Job's and Isaiah's prayer for the "Water of Life," for the "Bread of Heaven," for the "Savior of the Race," He used what might be called the Messiah motives, words that had been sounding down the ages, to convey one great idea. But even all of His disciples were not spiritually ready for them, and seeing the confusion, even anger, on their faces, He broke off abruptly to warn them:

It is the Spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you are spirit and are life.

The fact of the case then for the multitude and for us now is that only those who are taught of God, who are moved by Him, can hunger and thirst after righteousness. The secret of that desire for perfection is between the soul of man and the Spirit of God. How it is born, how it possesses one, that is for each individual to testify as Job and Isaiah and many a man before and since have testified in words that have gone down the ages. For the satisfaction of the hunger and thirst, the fulfillment of the longing, came Jesus!

Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.
* * *

Verily, verily, I say unto you, Moses gave you not that bread from heaven; but my Father giveth you the true bread from heaven.

For the bread of God is he which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world.

Then said they unto him, Lord, evermore give us this bread.

And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life; he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst.

But I said unto you, That ye also have seen me, and believe not.

All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.

For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me.

And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I

should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day.

And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day.

No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him; and I will raise him up at the last day.

It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me.

Not that any man hath seen the Father, save he which is of God, he hath seen the Father.

Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me hath everlasting life.

I am that bread of life.

Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness, and are dead.

This is the bread, which cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof, and not die.

I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live forever:

Between that great Beatitude and the announcement of Himself as the "Bread of Life" lay almost the whole ministry of Jesus, yet with all the preparation there were many of His followers who were not "ready to understand." It lay with Simon Peter to voice the belief once and for all for those who then and since then were ready!

But there are some of you that believe not. For Jesus knew from the beginning who they were that believed not, and who should betray him.

And he said, Therefore said I unto you, that no man can come unto me, except it were given unto him of my Father.

From that time many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him.

Then said Jesus unto the twelve, Will ye also go away?

Then Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life.

And we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God.



lessed are the Merciful:
for they shall obtain
Mercy.



F all the Beatitudes, this falls the easiest into the rhythm of our modern life; even if we have not attained, we have yet striven. We are aware, without forcing ourselves into any fervor of humility, that there is no man living who does not need mercy, ourselves not the least. What more just than that we who need mercy should show mercy!

Every age has its virtue, every stage of civilization its most despicable vice; to be unmerciful is felt today to be cruel and even brutish, and no man would willingly rest under the stigma of seeming cruel; most men would prefer to be thought unjust.

It could not have been so when our Lord first called the merciful man a blest man. Very great stress was laid on justice, a man-made, law-made justice, which took the negative form of retribution. Every act of violence had its recognized sequel; an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth!

To forgive one's enemy, to spare one who had injured you, more than all to show kindness toward one who had schemed to ruin you—such acts of mercy must have been extremely rare and open to the criticism of

weakness and even cowardliness. I suspect, too, that if pity and mercy and forgiveness were shown, it was rather by reason of the humble prayer of the thoroughly subdued and conquered foe; a foe already bowed at one's feet with the sword poised above his head. Mercy did not, I think, flow unasked from an injured and powerful conqueror; it was something to be implored by a guilty and helpless suppliant.

When our Lord put the showing of mercy on the ground of one's own need of mercy, irrespective of any humble prayer on the part of our one-time enemy, He really announced a new stage of the world's morality. Before that it had been:—

Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain the gratitude of those they have conquered.

—and, indeed, even today the good policy of such “mercifulness” is well recognized. It is familiarly spoken of as: “pouring coals of fire on the enemy's head,” and generally has a pleasing result. But to forgive your enemies, irrespective of the result, because you are yourself a sinner and need forgiveness from God, that is another proposition! It shifts the whole proceeding into another court. It makes you the prisoner at the bar, with God

the judge and with the man you have forgiven merely a witness.

For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you:

But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.

I can realize even a thoughtful man saying on this: "Why should a man be more forgiving than God? If God is unable to forgive man under certain circumstances, why should man forgive his fellows?"

I think the answer is so simple that it is one a child rather than a wise man would think of first.

God does not need mercy. He is not, nor can He be in the position of a man who does need mercy. To compare the two is impossible.

He can show mercy to an infinite degree to man, who can take mercy in only a finite degree; how finite depends on himself. Our Lord points out very specifically the circumstances where even that finiteness dwindles into nothing—where a man can receive justice, but where he is incapable of making use of mercy.

The mercy which man shows is really an act of humble worship, the mercy which God shows is an act of love.

Our Lord never confused the two. He waited until all the accusers of the woman taken in adultery had shown their mercy, based on their own need of mercy, and had departed, before He showed her God's mercy.

And the scribes and Pharisees brought unto him a woman taken in adultery; and when they had set her in the midst,

They say unto him, Master, this woman was taken in adultery, in the very act.

Now Moses in the law commanded us, that such should be stoned: but what sayest thou?

This they said, tempting him, that they might have to accuse him. But Jesus stooped down, and with his finger wrote on the ground, as though he heard them not.

So when they continued asking him, he lifted up himself, and said unto them, He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her.

And again he stooped down, and wrote on the ground.

And they which heard it, being convicted by their own conscience, went out one by

one, beginning at the eldest, even unto the last; and Jesus was left alone, and the woman standing in the midst.

When Jesus had lifted up himself, and saw none but the woman, he said unto her, Woman, where are those thine accusers? hath no man condemned thee?

She said, No man, Lord. And Jesus said unto her, Neither do I condemn thee: go and sin no more.

“Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy.”

It is that wonderful sentence, not, “do unto others as you would have them do unto you,” which is the keynote, the text of what our Lord said in the Sermon on the Mount, and in all His sermons, concerning mercy and forgiveness.

“Moreover, what ye would that men should do unto you, do also unto them,” is Jesus’ way of jogging the imaginations of slow minds in the great business of “loving our neighbor,” but it is not the reason for loving our neighbor. The reason for loving our neighbor is “that God so loved us.”

Showing mercy to our enemy, or to our friend, or to a stranger, is not because we

may need mercy from them, although we may, but because we need mercy now and all our days from God.

These are not man-made thoughts. Our Lord said they were gifts from on High, revelations from God, and as such, if men can receive them, they can hasten the Kingdom of Heaven on earth. Since our Lord announced them men have received and used much lesser truths from God, and the material circumstances of our lives have been vastly changed by reason of the belief of mankind in electricity, in chemical changes, in gravitation, in heat and light processes, in physical reactions.

If God can so clothe the grass, which is today in the field and tomorrow is cast into the oven, how much more can he clothe you, O ye of little faith.

All the truths of the Sermon on the Mount are Gifts of Life, but some we receive very doubtingly and some, like this Beatitude of Mercy, admiringly but only half comprehendingly.

That child's gift of taking what is said to it simply and acting on it, when do we lose it? How much we need it in later years,

how much we need it as followers of Christ! But we say of this Sermon on the Mount:—"It is impossible! The world would go to pieces!"

Yet what man is there of you, whom if his son ask bread, will he give him a stone?

Or if he ask a fish will he give him a serpent.

If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him?

Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets.

Also, I think, we "tremble to believe" the truths spoken by our Lord, because, like the Jews of old, our religion is more negative than affirmative, fuller of "shalt nots" than "be ye perfect." We understand breaking down superstition better than fulfilling prophecy. And yet before our Lord launched into the full tide of His revelation, He said:

Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil.

For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.

Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.

The prophecy of this great blossoming out of the ritual of sacrifice in the Temple into a ritual of mercy in daily life can be traced back centuries before Jesus came. The sentence: "I will have mercy and not sacrifice," is but one of many preparing men's minds for the great advance.


Nothing that our Lord was to reveal of the mercy of God but was the fulfillment of all that had gone before in the gradual revelation of the "law and the prophets." All the ceremonies of sacrifice, the "Day of Atonement," the "Mercy Seat," the prayers of the Temple priests, all these pointed to God's mercy. For if it were only a question of God's justice what sacrifice would suffice! With that simple sentence: "Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy," our Lord fulfilled, even while He finished all the

rites of Temple sacrifice. The symbols were made shadows by the reality. To be merciful was henceforth man's outward act of sorrow for his sins; no longer the blood of lambs and the gifts to the altar would suffice. A new ritual of daily worship was proclaimed:

For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven.



lessed are the Pure in
Heart: for they shall
see God.

 HIS was our Lord's promise on the future; a very momentous promise when one considers that most solemn announcement in the fourth Gospel,

No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him.

No man of that great race of monotheists had ever claimed that he had seen God. Even after their great heroes, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Jacob, Moses, David, the Prophets, had cast off mortality, those who revered their memory seemed never to have assumed with any certainty that they were henceforth, even in a spiritual, immaterial sense, face to face at last with God.

One forgets this, for a nearness to the Almighty was so characteristic of this race of seers that one scarcely realizes that what they saw was not Jehovah, but a vision of Jehovah—the glory, the messages, the fire, the light, the symbol of Jehovah. They received their message by a voice, by a sign, by a miracle—all this seems so near and intimate compared to our own prophetless, seerless age that until we set out to find a specific instance we are unaware that Jesus'

claim for the pure in heart marked an epoch and was in a sense the most momentous announcement He could well make to His fellow Jews.

The very name "Jehovah" bore testimony to the awe with which the Jews regarded the Deity. They dared not pronounce His name save in broken syllables. It was believed that no mortal could gaze upon Him and live. And even in pagan lore the seeing of the gods implied a kind of superhuman, transcendent quality in the seer—more than mortal beauty, or valor, or wisdom, or birth. One cannot feel that Jesus belittled this awe or ignored these world traditions; rather He summed them all in one transcendent spiritual quality possible of attainment by mortal man, yet not possible without the dedication of a life.

Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God.

Our ideas, not to speak of our beliefs, concerning life after death are rather vague and will-o'-the-wisp, so that when we are face to face with the disaster of losing some one inexpressibly dear to us, we hastily try to formulate our elusive hopes into a comforting creed. For the first time, some of us

scan anxiously the clues our Lord left to us, both as to His own experience after death and His words concerning the future life. I know of no utterance of His more satisfactory to hold to, or more fundamental in all it implies and all it promises, than this:

Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God.

In that brief statement everything is summed up—immortal vigor, completeness, perfection of purpose, infinite satisfaction beyond the possibility of satiety, love triumphant, eternal life.

If it is the rapturous hope that we may possess for those we love, it can also be the end and be-all of our own lives. We have all got to live for something, strive for some goal, look for some verification of truth. Here is a transcendent reason for life, a triumphant goal, a justification for all high endeavor—seeing God!

Men have endured untold privations to see truth. Statisticians, publicists, historians, philosophers, sociologists, reformers, explorers, scientists, artists, poets have been the heroes of the race in that search for verities. Here is the source of all Truth—God! If valor and zeal and unflinching purpose is

required of those who look on the work of God's hands, how superlatively more for those who are to look on God Himself!

For one realizes that to be pure in heart is not only to be valiant and steadfast and zealous in the pursuit of truth, but that far more difficult thing—selfless.

“Not my will, but Thine!”

Purity is not innocence. A man is not born possessing it as one is born beautiful, or a genius, or masterful, or industrious. Purity is “gold tried in the fire”; it is “a heart purged as with hyssop”; it is “a fortress built on a rock”; it is “the losing of a life,” the “counting of all else but dross,” the “striving to attain,” the “obedience to the heavenly vision,” a “life hid with Christ.”

Purity is more than heroism, more than genius, more than self-denial. It is the casting out of personal ambition, the voluntary withdrawal of a personal will in the destiny of others, the gallant acceptance of the changes and chances of life. It is the result of a daily dedication of a soul to God, of a hope to God, and of a faith in God. It is a heart given, not once, but a thousand times, a long trying as by fire, a life of love.

All things come at last to flower, so the pure of heart are blest by—seeing God!

We need feel no misgivings for souls like these “tried in the fire of love.” Their future lies resplendent before them.

I knew one such. She would be very humble of her worth, very deprecatory as to the value of her gift—of herself. She had given herself so often, and failed of a perfect gift, keeping something back, she would not guess that this thousandth time of giving was unique, that forgiveness and love had done a perfect work, that her desire had burned itself into a white flame of selflessness; she would not know how blest she was until she awoke in His likeness, with pure eyes, seeing Him as He is.

Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us.

Looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.

And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou has sent. * * *

I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil.

They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.

Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth.

As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world.

And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth.

Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word;

That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me.

And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one.

I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world

may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me.

Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory. * * *

And I saw no temple therein: for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it.

And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof.

And the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it: and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honour into it.

And the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day: for there shall be no night there.

And they shall bring the glory and honour of the nations into it.

And there shall in no wise enter into it anything that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie; but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life.

And he shewed me a pure river of water, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb.

In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruit, and yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.

And there shall be no more curse: but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and his servants shall serve him.

And they shall see his face; and his name shall be in their foreheads.

And there shall be no night there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light; and they shall reign for ever and ever. * * *

And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.

And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God.

And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away.

And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto me, Write: for these words are true and faithful.

And he said unto me, It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely.

He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son.


He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still.

And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be.

I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last.



12
lessed are the Peacemakers:
for they shall be called the
Children of God.



HERE is a description in the Old Testament of a man who, at least to the Hebrew way of thinking, was blessed beyond his fellows because of his perfectly balanced avoidance of evil on the one hand, and his delight in the law of God on the other hand.

Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful.

But his delight is in the law of the Lord; and in his law doth he meditate day and night.

And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper. * *

I sometimes think that this worthy of the Old Testament was not only the model for the good Jew of Christ's time, but that he is more or less the noble personage that we fancy ourselves to be when on beholding sinners at variance we offer our services as peacemakers.

It is all the more disconcerting, therefore, to find ourselves neither welcome by the con-

testants nor upheld by the bystanders. Too often we are made to look ridiculous, and sometimes—but that is rare—we even feel ridiculous. And it is proverbial that in family quarrels the way of the pacified is even harder than the way of the transgressor.

Certainly, nowhere in the sermon, which followed this text of our Lord's concerning peacemakers, is there any allusion to the type of Christian who sets himself to mediate between two angry fellow-beings. But so very much is said in the Sermon on the Mount about quarrels, and such clear laws are announced about how to deal with angry persons, that one is forced to the conclusion that the world's idea of a peacemaker as a third, disinterested, judicial mediator and Jesus Christ's idea of one was, and still is, worlds apart.

Quite evidently the peacemaker of our Lord's ideal type was one of the contestants, one of the two guilty quarrelers, or better still, the guiltless but injured one of the two.

He is adamant that the first religious duty of any man, if he is wrong in a quarrel, is to admit it, and if he is at fault to cut out the offense, even to his own great material hurt. He insists that in family quarrels between

husband and wife only the actual breaking of the marriage vows shall constitute a cause for divorce. In the whole matter of a man's standing in the community He insists that he make his foundations four-square—built upon a rock, so that he is known for what he is.

Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not kill; and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment: But I say unto you, That whosoever is angry with his brother without cause shall be in danger of the judgment:

Therefore if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath ought against thee:

Leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift.

Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy.

But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun

to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust. Judge not, that ye be not judged.

For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged: and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again.

And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but considereth not the beam that is in thine own eye?

Or how wilt thou say to thy brother, Let me pull out the mote out of thine eye; and, behold, a beam is in thine own eye?

Thou hypocrite, first cast out the beam out of thine own eye; and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye.

For if ye love them which love you, what thank have ye? for sinners also love those that love them.

And if ye do good to them which do good to you, what thank have ye? for sinners also do even the same.

And if ye lend to them of whom ye hope to receive, what thank have ye? for sinners also lend to sinners, to receive as much again.

But love ye your enemies, and do good, and lend, hoping for nothing again; and your

reward shall be great, and ye shall be the children of the Highest: for he is kind unto the unthankful and to the evil.

Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful.

And if thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell.

And if thy right hand offend thee, cut it off, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell. * * *

It hath been said, Whosoever shall put away his wife, let him give her a writing of divorcement:

But I say unto you, That whosoever shall put away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication, causeth her to commit adultery: and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced committeth adultery.

The light of the body is in the eye: if therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light.

But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness. If therefore the

light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness. * * *

Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit.

A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit.

Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire.

Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them. * * *

Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock:

And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock.

Once a man is sure of himself and the rightness of his own course he is even better fitted, according to our Lord, to make the advances towards reconciliation with his enemy. He then becomes the most successful, most enduring maker of peace. The fact that in the sermon the blessing to the peacemaker is reiterated and amplified—

Love your enemies, do good to them that hate you, pray for them that despitefully use you and persecute you; that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven—makes one sure that the whole little discourse which followed has a direct bearing on the beautiful art of peacemaking.

We get our clue, too, as to why a peacemaker should be blest in so peculiarly marked a manner, why he should be a child of God in a peculiar and uplifted sense.

“For he maketh the sun to rise on the evil and the good and sendeth rain on the just and the unjust.”

* * * “For he is kind unto the unthankful and the evil.”

There must be thousands of quarrels successfully “made up” by one or the other of the individuals involved offering the overtures of peace every day in this world. And there must be hundreds of thousands of differences, which never come to quarrels, which are peaceably settled by the forbearance and unselfishness of one or both of the parties involved.

In fact, the reason the law courts are not full to bursting and prisoners multiplied to suffocation is because there are countless men

and women and little children in the world who are peacemakers.

Blessed are they! Happy for the world that they lighten its darkness by their sunny tempers. Well may they be called "the Children of the Highest!"

As for that other form of peacemaking, assuming the role of the mediator, that I believe belongs to another situation altogether and requires a really transcendent superiority of mind and soul on the part of the mediator. It also implies a very unique relationship between the offender and the offended.

The whole matter of mediatorship, of the growth of man's ideal concerning forgiveness and of what God-like forgiveness really is, was set forth very clearly to the Hebrews in the Epistle to them in the New Testament. The whole history of forgiveness is reviewed in these few sentences. If one knows one's Bible, the world, from Abel's day to Jesus Christ's, is revealed in a flash.

Abel, who sought peace with God by the sprinkling of blood; Esau, who sought it with tears, ignorant how to repent; the Israelites who feared to seek it; to Jesus, who, taking upon Himself the sins of the

whole world, offered Himself "a living sacrifice, wholly acceptable unto God."

Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord: Looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled;

Lest there be any fornicator, or profane person, as Esau, who for one morsel of meat sold his birthright.

For ye know how that afterward, when he would have inherited the blessing, he was rejected: for he found no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears.

For ye are not come unto the mount that might be touched, and that burned with fire, nor unto blackness, and darkness, and tempest.

And the sound of a trumpet, and the voice of words; which voice they that heard entreated that the word should not be spoken to them any more:

(For they could not endure that which was commanded, And if so much as a beast touch the mountain, it shall be stoned, or thrust through with a dart:

And so terrible was the sight, that Moses said, I exceedingly fear and quake:)

But ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels.

To the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect,

And to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel.

The last Will and Testament of Jesus Christ concerned His great gift to His disciples:

“Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you:

“Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.”

The world today can scarcely feel itself the residuary legatee of the men who inherited that gift.

The idealists among the pacifists have one theory of Christ's opinion of war, the idealists among the militarists have another; between the two extremes the whole world stands questioning.

If God is on the side of those who forgive their enemies, then they are stronger than any army terrible with banners can possibly make them—that is sure!

The compact must be a double one, however. The man must be wholly for God, if God is wholly for the man.

One may call oneself a Christian and not be a Christian, in which case he is really salt without savor.

Or what king, going to make war against another king, sitteth not down first, and consulteth whether he be able with ten thousand to meet him that cometh against him with twenty thousand?

Or else, while the other is yet a great way off, he sendeth an ambassage, and desireth conditions of peace.

So likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple.

Salt is good: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be seasoned?

It is neither fit for the land, nor yet for the dunghill; but men cast it out. He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.



lessed are those who are Per-
secuted for Righteousness'
Sake: for theirs is the King-
dom of Heaben.



THE form in which the Beatitudes come down to us in the Gospel of Matthew is very charming. The arrangement—that is, the sequence of the parts, the balance of the beginning and the end, the brevity and the rhythm—all reveal art. The sermon on the Mount reported in the other gospels is the same sermon, recognizably the same, but the other reporters had not the same sense of form. Certainly the Beatitudes as a concrete part of the sermon—the text, as it were—did not make the same impression on other listeners as it did upon this one. Possibly none of them registered our Lord's own arrangement except afar off. Possibly this form of the Beatitudes is the nearest to Jesus' own, and because of its polished and easily memorized form has remained intact in at least one gospel; or it may have reached this beautiful form by constant repetition, which in itself is usually a simplifying and beautifying process. In any case, the Beatitudes are a gift of Jesus to the world of immense spiritual import.

When He announced them, our Lord made a very solemn statement:

Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill.

For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.

Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.

For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven.

On another occasion He publicly summed up all "the law and the prophets" in two comprehensive commandments, which included and epitomized the Ten Commandments; namely, that men should love God with all their hearts, and their neighbors as themselves. But the Beatitudes are vastly more than the commandments as Moses gave them. They represent a far greater knowledge of God and a far higher conception of the possibilities of man. If Jesus had given the world no other revelations but these eight great spiritual truths, the mystery of where He got His knowledge could be explained on no ordinary human grounds.

And he went out from thence, and came into his own country; and his disciples follow him.

And when the sabbath day was come, he began to teach in the synagogue: and many hearing him were astonished, saying, From whence hath this man these things? and what wisdom is this which is given unto him, that even such mighty works are wrought by his hands?

Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary, the brother of James, and Joses, and of Juda, and Simon? and are not his sisters here with us? And they were offended at him.

Then answered Jesus and said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do: for what things soever he doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise.

For the Father loveth the Son, and showeth him all things that himself doeth; and he will shew him greater works than these, that ye may marvel.

For as the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them; even so the Son quickeneth whom he will. * * *

He said on a yet more momentous occasion, towards the end of His early career:

Now they have known that all things whatsoever thou hast given me are of thee.

For I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me; and they have received them, and have known surely that I came out from thee, and they have believed that thou didst send me.

I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine. * * *

Then said they unto him, Who art thou? And Jesus saith unto them, Even the same that I said unto you from the beginning.

I have many things to say and to judge of you: but he that sent me is true; and I speak to the world those things which I have heard of him.

They understood not that he spake to them of the Father.

Then said Jesus unto them, When ye have lifted up the Son of man, then shall ye know that I am he, and that I do nothing of myself; but as my Father hath taught me, I speak these things.

And he that sent me is with me: the Father hath not left me alone; for I do always those things that please him.

As he spake these words, many believed on him.

And he lifted up his eyes on his disciples, and he said, Blessed be ye poor: for yours is the kingdom of God.

Blessed are ye that hunger now: for ye shall be filled. Blessed are ye that weep now: for ye shall laugh.

Blessed are ye, when men shall hate you, and when they shall separate you from their company, and shall reproach you, and cast out your name as evil, for the Son of man's sake.

Rejoice ye in that day, and leap for joy: for, behold, your reward is great in heaven: for in the like manner did their fathers unto the prophets.

But woe unto you that are rich! for ye have received your consolation.

Woe unto you that are full! for ye shall hunger. Woe unto you that laugh now! for ye shall mourn and weep.

Woe unto you, when all men shall speak well of you! for so did their fathers to the false prophets.

Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

For the Beatitudes were then and are today great spiritual truths. And just as the force we call life and the force we call death and the force we call love are not yet possible of explanation, but are perfectly possible of utilization, so we can realize when Jesus was announcing the law of God, that the persecuted for righteousness' sake were possessors of the kingdom of heaven, His listeners were in no mental or spiritual position to comprehend the processes by which He knew it to be so.

One may fancy a gardener touching now this seed and now that, and for each seed holding up to the sunlight a blossoming plant which Nature had evolved from its infinitesimal cell of life. Only a knowledge first hand could see the flower in the seed, and to one, gazing at the miracle for the first time, the relation of cause and effect would be incomprehensible. For the ordinary man the fact would be all he could take in, and for perhaps the hundredth man the arrangement of the facts would give an added beauty to the revelation. Left to himself, no inexperienced bystander could anticipate the processes of Nature and foretell the flower from the seed or even the fruit from the flower. It must have been a startling thought to

even the most thoughtful of Jesus' listeners that the same flower of completion—the kingdom of heaven—should by the law of the spirit result to the “poor in spirit” and the “martyrs for righteousness’ sake.” The one requires such self-effacement, the other such singularity of courage!

Then said he, Unto what is the kingdom of God like? and whereunto shall I resemble it?

It is like a grain of mustard seed, which a man took, and cast into his garden; and it grew, and waxed a great tree; and the fowls of the air lodged in the branches of it.

And again he said, Whereunto shall I liken the kingdom of God?

It is like leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened.

And he went through the cities and villages, teaching, and journeying toward Jerusalem.

Then said one unto him, Lord, are there few that be saved? And he said unto them,

Strive to enter in at the strait gate: for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able.

In a subtle, not easily definable way, the last Beatitude gathers up all of the others. It is

difficult of definition, because both the word righteousness and the state of being of those "possessing the kingdom of heaven" elude verbal analysis. We have not the language for spiritual verities. Our symbols are all things that have to do with the senses, and that short-hand of expression which we call speech has not the vocabulary to name, let alone define, the unseen and the eternal.

But however little one may be able to put into words his idea of the "kingdom of heaven," or to give the full meaning of "righteousness" in a phrase, it is plain that each Beatitude is, so to speak, a flower of the seed of righteousness. The poor in spirit, the meek, the merciful, the pure in heart, those hungering for righteousness, those persecuted for righteousness, all have a true relationship toward God—righteousness. In the last Beatitude the fact that through pain and temptation and the power of evil the soul endures steadfast, seeing One who is invisible, brings righteousness to its earthly climax. One may lose perfectly as well as gain perfectly. In this case the loss is the whole world completely sacrificed; the flower of that death is the kingdom of heaven.

Probably if we could comprehend the law of God governing this transformation we

would find that it has something to do with the capacity of the soul. The capacity for giving may imply a capacity for receiving, and the power of endurance of loss may generate a power to endure gain. What we speak of as rewards must actually be results, just as the flower is the result of the seed.

Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake.

Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you.
* * *

Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rend you.

Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you:

For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened.

Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth

to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat:

Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.

Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves.

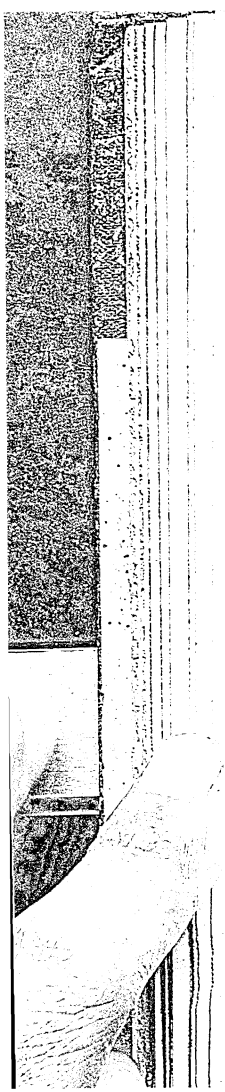
Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles?

The whole test of the soul is what it desires. If poverty borne passively, or disease borne stupidly, or tyranny borne lazily brought the kingdom of heaven, how beautiful would be the faces of all the poor and sick and down-trodden!

Men fight like tigers for a bare living; they bear stoically tyranny for the drug inertia, they sacrifice ten, twenty years of life for temporary satisfaction, but the mystery of the kingdom of God is not for such.

Men are persecuted in this world for the sake of much that is not righteous.

If after the manner of men I have fought with beasts at Ephesus, what advantageth it me, if the dead rise not? let us eat and drink; for tomorrow we die.



Grinding the faces of the poor is a very common form of persecution, but it does not imply that the poor are righteous. Theological cold-shouldering endured for the sake of some modern Babel is not of necessity "for righteousness' sake." Class persecution endured for the sake of some theory of socialism, syndicalism, pacifism is not of necessity for "righteousness' sake." To be a martyr, stoned or lynched in the market place, to be burned in effigy, flayed in the newspapers, tabooed in society, does not necessarily imply righteousness toward God on the part of the victim.

"By their fruits ye shall know them." Not their congregational fruits, but their individual fruits.

There is no virtue, in itself, of endurance without an end, no piousness in being poor because another man is a thief and grafter, no crown of glory for sitting down under double dealing and injustice and selfishness, no "well done, good and faithful servant" for one who has served Mammon for wretched wages in sweatshops rather than starve. For one thing is sure—righteousness is not blind endurance; it is seeing His face who is invisible. It is not hiding one's light, but making it shine unto all who are in the house,

Nor is it something to illumine one's own perfections; it is a light, so that men, seeing your good works, may glorify your Father which is in heaven. Righteousness is not innocuous desuetude; it isn't just being harmless.

Salt is good, but if the salt hath lost its savor—its tang—it is good for nothing but to be cast out and to be trodden under the foot of men.

Righteousness is not necessarily being loved; it is not surely being voted for by the majority—hence the weak place in the armor of democracy—it is first, last, and always, being right with God.

"If men shall revile you and persecute you for My Sake, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely for My Sake, you are blessed!" It is a sign that you are not a stupid or ignorant or selfish servant. Remember the prophets, also My good servants, who were persecuted for My Sake before you. Great is your reward in—Heaven.

But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us.

We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; Persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed;

Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body.

For we which live are alway delivered unto death for Jesus' sake, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh.

So then death worketh in us, but life in you.

We having the same spirit of faith, according as it is written, I believed, and therefore have I spoken; we also believe, and therefore speak;

Knowing that he which raised up the Lord Jesus shall raise up us also by Jesus, and shall present us with you.

For all things are for your sakes, that the abundant grace might through the thanksgiving of many redound to the glory of God.

For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day.

For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory;

While we look not at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal.

Then Peter began to say unto him, Lo, we have left all, and have followed thee.

And Jesus answered and said, Verily I say unto you, There is no man that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my sake, and the gospel's, but shall receive an hundredfold now in this time, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions; and in the world to come to eternal life.

For many that are first shall be last; and the last first. * * *

And they were in the way going up to Jerusalem; and Jesus went before them; and they were amazed; and as they followed, they were afraid. And he took again the twelve and began to tell them what things should happen unto him.

Saying, Behold, we go up to Jerusalem; and the Son of man shall be delivered unto the

chief priests, and unto the scribes; and they shall condemn him to death, and shall deliver him to the Gentiles:

And they shall mock him, and shall scourge him, and shall spit upon him, and shall kill him; and the third day he shall rise again.

And James and John, the sons of Zebedee, come unto him, saying, Master, we would that thou shouldest do for us whatsoever we shall desire.

And he said unto them, What would ye that I should do for you?

They said unto him, Grant unto us that we may sit, one on thy right hand, and the other on thy left hand, in thy glory.

But Jesus said unto them, Ye know not what ye ask: can ye drink of the cup that I drink of? and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?

And they said unto him, We can. And Jesus said unto them, Ye shall indeed drink of the cup that I drink of; and with the baptism that I am baptized withal shall ye be baptized;

But to sit on my right hand and on my left hand is not mine to give; but it shall be given to them for whom it is prepared.

There are some sentimentalists, mostly among those who pride themselves on intellect, who balk at that "reward in heaven," as though to have a goal in life, a "be-all and end-all," the desire to pass from glory unto glory were belittling. Logically such would press the seed into its earthen grave and say: "Be a good seed under ground, but never dream of being a happy flower up in the sunlight!" They believe that the mention of the result of being good spoils it all by vitiating the motive. They pretend to regard the natural transformation as an anti-climax. They seem to try to content themselves with incompleteness; they would take less than heaven for the pain of earth.

But for all things created by the hand of God perfection must be an instinct, fulfillment the law, joy the goal.

At the same day there came certain of the Pharisees, saying unto him, Get thee out, and depart hence: for Herod will kill thee.

And he said unto them, Go ye, and tell that fox, Behold, I cast out devils, and I do cures today and tomorrow, and the third day I shall be perfected.

Nevertheless I must walk today, and tomorrow, and the day following: for it cannot be that a prophet perish out of Jerusalem.

O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, which killest the prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee; how often would I have gathered thy children together, as a hen doth gather her brood under her wings, and ye would not!

Behold your house is left unto you desolate: and verily I say unto you, Ye shall not see me, until the time come when ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.

And he began to teach them, that the Son of man must suffer many things, and be rejected of the elders, and of the chief priests, and scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again.

And he spake that saying openly. And Peter took him, and began to rebuke him.

But when he had turned about and looked on his disciples, he rebuked Peter, saying, Get thee behind me, Satan: for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but the things that be of men.

And when he had called the people unto him with his disciples also, he said unto them,

Whosoever will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me.

For whosoever will save his life shall lose it; but whosoever shall lose his life for my sake and the gospel's, the same shall save it.

For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?

Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?

Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation; of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father with the holy angels.

But now I go my way to him that sent me; and none of you asketh me, Whither goest thou?

But because I have said these things unto you, sorrow hath filled your heart.

Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away; for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you.

I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world; again, I leave the world, and go to the Father.

A woman when she is in travail hath sorrow, because her hour is come: but as soon as she is delivered of the child, she remembereth no more the anguish for joy that a man is born into the world.

And ye now therefore have sorrow: but I will see you again and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you.

The tears our Lord wept in the Garden were as nothing to the anguish He would have had to endure had He not fulfilled the will of His Father. The shameful death He died would have been a passing shadow compared to the awfulness of a life thwarted of its purpose. Our gratitude and love, which has flowered into worship, go out to Him spontaneously, not because He did something which, had He chosen, He might have left undone, but because He was so perfect that, with all the limitations of mortality fettering His feet, He walked erect and beautiful; because He never paused in His glorious development; because in making His supreme sacrifice He understood its eternal significance, and, in spite of pain and darkness, never contemplated anything save fulfilling His Father's Will; because so eternal was

the power of life in Him that He could conquer death; so infinite the power of goodness that He could vanquish evil!

And Jesus answered them, saying, The hour is come, that the Son of man should be glorified.

Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit.

He that loveth his life shall lose it; and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal.

If any man serve me, let him follow me; and where I am, there shall also my servant be: if any man serve me, him will my Father honour.

Now is my soul troubled; and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour: but for this cause came I unto this hour.

Father, glorify thy name. Then came there a voice from heaven, saying, I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again.

The people, therefore, that stood by, and heard it, said that it thundered: others said, An angel spake to him.

The every day miracle of the change of the grub into the butterfly, the embryo into the bird, the seed into the flower, the continuity of identity in the babe and the youth and the adult and the old man, the transformations that love, or fear, or hate, or desire will effect, must in the end tell upon the imagination and prepare one to accept the transcendent miracle of the conquest of the body by the soul. St. Paul of all men understood it:

Awake to righteousness, and sin not; for some have not the knowledge of God: I speak this to your shame.

But some man will say, How are the dead raised up? and with what body do they come? Thou fool, that which thou sowest is not quickened, except it die:

And that which thou sowest, thou sowest not that body that shall be, but bare grain, it may chance of wheat, or of some other grain:

But God giveth it a body as it hath pleased him, and to every seed his own body.

All flesh is not the same flesh: but there is one kind of flesh of men, another flesh of beasts, another of fishes, and another of birds.

There are also celestial bodies, and bodies terrestrial: but the glory of the celestial is one, and the glory of the terrestrial is another.

There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars; for one star differeth from another star in glory.

So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption:

It is sown in dishonour, it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power:

It is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body.

And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit.

Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural: and afterward that which is spiritual.

The first man is of the earth, earthy: the second man is the Lord from heaven.

As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy: and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly.

And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly.

Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God: neither doth corruption inherit incorruption.

Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed.

In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.

For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality.

So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory.

O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?

The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law.

But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.

And that Jesus, who hungered and thirsted for righteousness with the hunger and thirst of God, was satisfied, who can doubt:—

Jesus answered them, Do ye now believe?

Behold, the hour cometh, yea, is now come, that ye shall be scattered, every man to his own, and shall leave me alone: and yet I am not alone, because the Father is with me.

These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.

These words spake Jesus, and lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee:

As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him.

And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent.

I have glorified thee on the earth; I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do.

And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was.

O righteous Father, the world hath not known thee: but I have known thee, and these have known that thou hast sent me.

And I have declared unto them thy name, and will declare it; that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them.

For nearly three centuries the world has worshipped, or tried to worship, a despised, humiliated, lacerated peasant Christ. A mild, delicate, dreamy youth, without education, humble, unassuming, caught in the vortex of a wicked plot, forsaken, betrayed, murdered.

The Hoffman pictures of Jesus, not Michael Angelo's, mark the type admired by most Christians today.

Yet Jesus was not a peasant. He was the carefully nurtured heir to the throne of David, and as such pursued and threatened by Herod in His very infancy. He was highly

educated, to the amazement of his contemporaries, since He had been kept out of the orthodox schools of the Temple. He was very masterful, even as a child, certainly extraordinarily so as a man. Even those who were kept in ignorance of His unique right to the throne wished to make Him a king. His choice of death rather than be King of the Jews, was so singular and required such nerve and prophetic insight that, when one remembers that He faced it in spite of all human counsels to the contrary, one feels that His will power has not been equaled by any world leader. His physical and mental powers must have been very marked to bear the strain put upon them during those years when "He had not where to lay His head." In fact, the attitude of the disciples, awe, devotion, utter panic at His seeming defeat, all point to a heroic, godlike figure; incomprehensible, perhaps, but always their Master.

So much has been said about our Lord's suffering and humiliation on earth that we forget He was a joyous victor. What hero ever before or since uttered so triumphal a prayer; what finisher of an epic task so glorious a valedictory!